

DDO Summary
3/9/78
Leslie Witzelman

ED Browder - Vol 1

Volume one of the Browder files covers the period from 1954 to 1961. A May 28, 1954 cable ~~rep~~ from Mexico City reports that Browder was born in Amarillo, Texas on June 22, 1917. He has a long record of passing bad checks and has been convicted twice in federal courts for violation of the Neutrality Act and theft of govt property in attempting to send 2 planes to assist in the revolution against the Venezuelan government. Under the name of Edward Sabatino, Browder obtained reservations in the Hotel Monte Cassino in Mexico on May 6. "For info ... this man considered either soldier of fortune or provocateur and info wanted on his activity by Havana."

Other Browder aliases: Edward Browder Sabatino, Eduardo Sabatino, Edward Sabatino Ollruier

In a letter from Browder to Mr. Henry Luce (Time-Life), dated 11-15-54, Browder offers Luce exclusive rights in full coverage of revolution in Costa Rica. Browder offers to send a C-47 to Dallas to pick up two of Luce's representatives. In the P.S. Browder says he would like to have George Silk on this assignment. A Nov 19, 1954 letter states that a wire was sent ^{from Time} saying "sorry cannot undertake."

180-10141-10276

Summary written
3/2/78.

Norman Rothman 201

inclusive dates 1951-1975

1 - categorize 201 file on Rothman - as "former witting collaborator (relationship terminated). GI code A3"

(As of 17 ? 1975

From back of File

Four
2- ~~Three~~ pages of legal pad notes - hand written - no date or author given
Appears to be notes from an interview, but it is not labeled

re who is being interviewed. It could be Rothman or

David M. McConnell. The first entry ~~is~~ is

"1. David M. McConnell Ed 38716

Charlotte, N.C.

2727-POB"

The second entry is "Norman Rothman

American citizen - DPOB NYC 2? Dec 1914

Runs Bar Bel-Air hotel

Owner Sans Souci, night club, Havana

Dispute with brother-in-law of

Batista. Moved to province Union 6-4030

425 Surfside Blvd."

Sounds like it's an interview with Rothman.

The third entry is labelled "Items" and lists several points.

Item a - "Cardenas plantation - ammo dump

Roth. claims able blow up if w/ permission FBI

~~R.~~ R. will assemble operators for pb."

Item B - "Can set up bases in Yucatan - \$50-100,000 cost
strips for B-26 / napalm - get FC

Arango boys to staff deal."

2-
Item C - "Assign R sub targets - can handle w/
Latin friends

Congo Flap cutting into recruit pool."

D - "claims analysis Invasion flap"

E - "claims know Prio, Betancourt"

F - "claims his contacts can get into Chinese Commie groups"

G - "suspects Patrick op as being funny and ill-advised"

page 2⁴ - labeled "R" lists a-h

a - "425 Surfside Blvd; Belair Bar - Cubans frequent -
ex-invasors; Batistianos"

b - "Francisco - friend-executed; Rogelio Gonzalez - "Francisco"
war name; Sori Marion (sp?) - business acquaintance
Efigenio Fernandez (Dr) - associate

bkgnd c - "Aristi (peru) group - contacts

Mexico - Cardenas - contacts; opposed Frente;
story re camps - malcontents/shootings; Cardenas -

commo via Mexi friends. Last contact 4-5 months ago

@ Mexi friends in contact with friends; has met;

Last met 2 yrs ago Acapulco; Has visited farm after

Acapulco; Has been in Yucatan; Last there 1959 - two days
claims Indian friends.

Saabhez Arango:

Has met; Last met six weeks ago

In last year - ca 20-25 times

R knows friends: "Garcia" and "Tito"

a. Re Sub-Targets:

FC Target:

Invasion (Longo) Flyers names

Base for air target - Mexico

2 B-26's / 2 P-51's / Gas / Bombs.

Monroe Am Emb checked out R on previous charge

claims airstrip in existence (Austin Young - R "personal pilot")

e. Chinese Commie Group

"Claims groups Chinese commies going into Canada from Cuba. Grps in Peru / Lima - ca 2 yrs ago"

f. Cuban Assets

"How many agents? How many sent last yr?"

At date - ca. 6 who in Travel business?
Export Business

Nature of Ops - Coast Guard asked R re infiltrations / exfiltrations at Bel Air interview; also re shipments. Also asked re Puerto Rico. Capability re Black market money exchange - thru G."

g. Dominican Republic

"Last visit - 1959. Purpose - Batista. Commo to assets / contacts. John Abbes asked R do job."

h. Gun-running

"claims same people / houses used by CIA in those jobs for which R prosecuted. Claims shipped ^{ped} 40 ships for Frente - CIA trucked the stuff up - he (R) loaded. Purchase 20 ft "Reeter" - pilot boat to underground."

3 DBF 35028 15 Oct 59 -

"New Anti-Castro organization with hqs. in Miami at Biltmore Terrace Hotel, managed by subj. (Rothman) who is supposed to provide source thru U.S. gangsters for guns and other weapons."

19 Oct 59 - under indictment
Pittsburgh - Interstate
Transportation of stolen arms."

10 Dec 59 - "Going to Yucatan Mexico to seek a site for a base of operations against the Castro govt."

31 Dec 59 - Subj. after returning from Mexico City, reportedly remarked that "We have a strip" "A compatriot of subj. Eduardo Whitehouse, is later said to remark that "We have the planes." "Believed that both subj. and Whitehouse are acquiring planes for purpose of setting up base of operations in Yucatan Peninsula for anti-Castro group headed by Col. Orlando Piedra and Roberto Fernandez Miranda."

23 June 1960 - convicted of interstate transp. of firearms stolen from Nat'l Guard Armory - Canton, Ohio. sentence: 5 yrs, and \$10,000 fine

5 Feb 1960 - subj. released from Allegheny County Jail - ^{after} appeal bond posted.

27 Sept 1960 - "Approach made by subj. who is hood. indicted for gun running and stolen bond currently out on \$50,000 bond. FBI contact felt subj. interest straight profit motive or hope favorable treatment re above rap. Also believe inspite of derog info subj. could probably produce two Mig aircraft which would be brought to states by one Czech and one Cuban pilot."

DOB 14 March 1914
 4- Whitehouse Insua, Eduardo Julio aka "Teddy"

compatriot of Rothman -

5 April 1960 - report - subj (Whitehouse) lost U.S. citizenship by voting in Cuba. He & Elliot Spinning intended to take B-26

to Vera Cruz. Sam Rubin (believed to be identical @

Sam "Stretch" Rubin - chief doorman at Biltmore Terrace Hotel)

reported owner of B-26 Reg # N32446.

31 Dec 1959 - U.S. customs seized B-26 at Miami & another (N28816) B26 at Vero Beach, when Whitehouse & Spinning attempted to move

12 Dec 1960 - Whitehouse - pilot who in 1960 - ^{early} responsible for setting fire to sugar crops from air.

Asked by Alberto Fernandez for help. - Fernandez has set up a guerrilla organization for ex-employees.

- Whitehouse formerly head of Cuban Civil Aeronautics Administration.

13 Feb 1961 - According to Alexander I. Rorke, Jr., Whitehouse has 70 pilots available & ready to take drastic action against Castro. & have worked out a "definite plan of action" to accomplish "Castro's overthrow."

5- Orlando Piedra - 261-247879 - formerly in charge of Dept. of Investigations, Cuban National Police, under Batista.
 8 Jan 1960

According to Enrique Fernandez Parajon, both he & subj (Piedra) are heading the "military Section" of the counterrevolutionary group which is receiving monetary support from Batista.

4 Mar 1960 - subj met or planned to meet @ Gen. Jose Pedraza during the latter's visit to Washington.

Report on subj. by special agent (on 27 Mar 1961) of the N.O. FBI office who handles local Cuban matters

- member of BRAC

- fled Cuba 1 Jan 1959

- ~~late Sep 195~~ 2 Oct 1959 - received orders from Batista by Jose Suarez Nunez to immediately attempt to consolidate whatever anti-Castro forces he is able for a move against Castro with a particular cited condition,

6- Miranda Fernandez -

8 March 1961

Admitted in 1959 & 1960 had furnished aid directly to Rolando Masferrer. Now providing aid & assistance to his former military regiment who are still in Cuba working against Castro. He thinks group is associated @ FRD.

X 7- ~~Dispatch to Chief, FOR From C/S Pretoria~~

Cable to Director From MASH MASH 0828

Sept 27, 1960

"1. FBI has advised of approach made to Frank Fiorini for procurement of two MIG aircraft which would be brought to states by one Czech and one Cuban pilot. Approach made by Norman Rothman who is hood indicted for gun running and stolen bonds currently out on \$50,000 bond." 2. "FBI contact let Rothman interest was straight profit motive or hope for favorable treatment re above rap. Contact stated no chance whatever latter and that had advised Fiorini that FBI could not handle such a deal but would pass to other

interested U.S. govt agency. said that inspite of above derog info believed Rothman could very probably produce 3. Has Hqs. any interest pursue. (entire cable)

8- Sept 28 1960 - cable To JMASH From Director -

orig - N. Imier releasing officer: R.E. Gomez (Ned Holman signature)

Authenticating officer - ^{J.D.} Esterline

cite Dir 02972 reponse to #7 - MASH 0828

"If Ref para 1 plan involves detection of MIG and Czech pilot from Cuba Hqs. vitally interested. Advise all pertinent details." (Entire Cable)

from
9- JMASH response Oct 1, 1960 cite mash 0891
to Dir 2972 ref A - mash 828

1. View Rothman forthcoming trial local FBI feels Justice Department be advised prior any CIA contact subj. This to prevent any complication prosecution if op succeeds and Rothman attempts make deal re possible prison term. 2. Per telecon 29 Sept mash advised Hqs Santiago Rey also approached by Rothman with same plan ref A. If ~~Hqs~~ Hqs decides go ahead with ops, mash plans make contact through Rey."

10- From mash to Dir Oct 20, 1960 - mash 1162

Request replies to refs. (References are MASIT 0625; MASH 0891) - "FBI still has open case Ref A. and has called several times. Also desire give positive answer to Santiago Rey on Ref B."

What is
MASH
0625?

11- memorandum for record. Subj: Norman Rothman

Dated 30 June 1961 prepared by Catherine La Maistre

#- DOB - 26 DEC 1914 POB - Bronx, NY

2- "When Rothman first came to CIA's attention in September 1958, he was living in Dallas, Texas and was allegedly engaged in public relations work. According to his wife, Gloria, he made a one-week trip to Los Angeles in September on undisclosed business."

3- In October 1959, Rothman was managing the Biltmore Terrace Hotel in Miami from which he was reported by the FBI to be supplying an anti-Castro organization with arms which he obtained through U.S. gangsters."

4. "Following Pittsburgh conviction, Rothman went to Chicago, where he surrendered on charges of playing a key role in one of the biggest robberies in modern crim. history, the 13.5 million \$ looting of a Canadian bank. Robbery was touched off when the Canadian branch of the mafia received a hurry-up order from the Caribbean for arms. The Canadian mafia did not have the money to buy arms, but it knew how to ~~and~~ get hands on the contents of the Brockville, Ontario bank. It called upon the U.S. mafia for assistance, and it was then that Rothman entered the picture, it was charged." "Subsequently portions of loot turned up in Shanghai, Argentina, Cuba, & Australia.

continued

5- "Before Rothman was tracked down in connection with the above crimes, he was reported by the FBI as traveling to Yucatan to seek a base of operations against the Castro gov't. In this enterprise he was associated with Eduardo (Teddy) Whitehouse Insua, formerly of the Cuban Civil Aeronautical Association; ex-Colonel Orlando Piedra Negueruela, former member of BRAC and head of Cuban Bureau of Investigations; and Colonel Roberto Fernandez Micandea, brother-in-law of Batista and former commander of the presidential guards as well as president of the National Sports Commission. While no mention is made of Rolando Masterrer in this connection, Rothman has engaged in many exploits and deals with Masterrer."

6- "In September 1960, Rothman still out on \$50,000 bond, made an approach to Frank Fiorini, soldier of fortune, offering to obtain two migs - one flown by a Czech and another by a Cuban. Fiorini felt that Rothman's ^{interest} ~~purpose~~ was stimulated by a straight profit motive or by hopes for favorable treatment regarding the Federal case against him."

7- In Oct 1960 R. again appeared in Dallas, where he approached Robert E. Grinnan, an oil contracts promotion man. Rothman claimed to have connections with Nor-Roth Industries of N.Y.C. and stated that clients of his had an interest in purchasing $\frac{1}{2}$ million metric tons of diesel fuel oil and one million metric tons of crude oil to be delivered over a five-year period to Hamburg, Germany. Grinnan, puzzled by the offer, reported to the FBI. He went to N.Y. in November and met Rothman and the other principals of the deal, a Mary Talley and a Dr. Phillip Paneth de Panay. Largely because of Grinnan's suspicions the deal was never consummated."

continued -

10~

8- "As of December 1960, Rothman was living in Dallas, Texas."

memo from
taken from
no 1 - hand
written notes.

12- memo for Deputy Chief - WH Division from Clark W. ~~Simmons~~ ^{Simmons}
re meeting with Norman Rothman & David M. McConnell
dated June 30, 1961

met @ Rothman and McConnell on 29 June 1961 in office
of Deputy Atty Gen'l to evaluate "Rothman's claim to
operational assets inside Cuba and elsewhere in the
Caribbean area. 4-6:30 ~~6:30~~ P.M. Agreed that R would return
to Miami on Friday 30 June, and Mr. McConnell
would phone Simmons on July 5 for evaluation of
"Rothman's operational potential in Cuban affairs."

McConnell spoke to Simmons privately. McConnell described
himself as a "leading political figure in the Democratic Party machine in
N. Carolina," that he was "acquainted @ Rob. Kennedy, Gen. Taylor, Gen. Van
Fleet.", Corporate tax lawyer's concerned over embarrassment to the
Kennedy administration caused by the Cuban "fiasco." McConnell stated
that Rothman claims to have assets and capabilities which would enable
Rothman to destroy the arms dumps on the plantation of ex-pres. Cardenas
of Mexico, to set up operational bases in the Yucatan at a cost of \$50 -
\$1,000, to sabotage targets in Cuba identified by the U.S. govt.,
and to provide positive intelligence on the activities of Chinese Communist
groups in the Western Hemisphere."

Rothman stated @ Castro had executed 3 of his close friends:
Rogelio Gonzalez; Sori Marin; Efigenio Fernandez.

Continued

(11)

2- Operational capability to destroy arms dumps of Cardenas. He had agent assets in Mexico, said he made contact as recently as 4 to 5 months ago @ Mexican friends.

3- Constructed an airstrip in the Yucatan, built by Indians. One B-26 had landed there.

4- Well-acquainted @ Sanchez Arango. Considers him a good personal friend. Last met @ " 6 weeks ago.

5- Had the personnel & capabilities to attack or sabotage any target of our choosing in Cuba. He had a basic plan for assass. of Castro. Plan called for an air attack @ napalm against Castro when he was addressing a rally. Had 100 pilots who had participated in invasion of Cuba & now working for Congolese Air Force. Would not identify pilots.

6- Said he had many agents going in & out of Cuba. Said he was in contact @ 6 agents at this time. Agents were in the tourist travel business or export-import businesses, entered US via 3rd countries.

7- knows of many Chinese communists going into Canada from Cuba.

8- expressed resentment over gun-running charges. " said that CIA used the same people in these gun running activities and the same houses, for which he ^(Mr. Rothman) was being prosecuted by the Federal Government. He said that he had supervised 40 ship operations on behalf of the Frente against Cuba. He said that CIA would truck the stuff to the point

of ship pick-up, where he (Mr. Rothman) would supervise the loading of the ships. He said that he had purchased the 20' ship "reefer" which was the first boat to support the underground in Cuba. He added that he knew everything the CIA planned in maritime operations, and for the invasion."

9- close friend of John Abbes Garcia, Chief of Dominican Rep. Security.

Comment by Simmus - did not believe Rothman's claim of controlling agents and material assets. Recommended no further discussion @ Rothman re these claims.

13- memo for record - subj. Norman Rothman 10 July 1961
prepared by Catherine LeMaistre

- During Batista regime Rothman was supervisor of slot machines in Camaguey province under the national supervisor, Alberto Ardura Moya, who was one of owners of Tropicana Nightclub in Havana.

indicates as of Dec 1960 Rothman living in Dallas, but recent reports place him in Miami.

14- Rothman's silent partner in Sans Souci - Eufemio Fernandez Ortega